

Star Sport

Dhaka, Sunday, September 17, 2000, e-mail: dssports@bdonline.com



Olympic Special



The echidna Millie, named after the millennium, is a born optimist and information guru who has her sights set firmly on the future. She is sharp and witty, analytical and assertive. She represents the earth.

TODAY'S MENU

SYDNEY, Sept 16 (AFP): The schedule for Day 2 Sunday at the Sydney Olympics:

FOOTBALL
Bruce Stadium, Canberra
Women's Preliminaries (Norway v Nigeria)
Men's Preliminaries (Slovakia v Japan)
Melbourne Cricket Ground
Women's Preliminaries (USA v China)
Men's Preliminaries (Spain v Chile)
Brisbane Cricket Ground
Men's Preliminaries (Brazil v South Africa)
Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide
Men's Preliminaries (South Korea v Morocco)

HOCKEY
State Hockey Centre
Men's Preliminaries (Australia v Poland) (Argentina v India)
Women's Preliminaries (Netherlands v China) (Australia v Britain)
Women's Preliminaries (Korea v Spain) (Germany v New Zealand)

ARCHERY

ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS

BADMINTON

BASKETBALL

BEACH VOLLEYBALL

BOXING

TRACK CYCLING

EQUESTRIAN

FENCING

HANDBALL

JUDO

ROWING

SAILING

SHOOTING

SOFTBALL

SWIMMING

TABLE TENNIS

TRIATHLON

VOLLEYBALL

WATER POLO

WEIGHTLIFTING



JENNY-OF-ALL-TRADES: Star US swimmer Jenny Thompson seen here during the heats of the ladies 100-metre butterfly at the Sydney International Aquatic Centre yesterday. Thompson later won her sixth Olympic gold with the American 4x100 metres relay team. — AFP photo

Thorpedo right on target

SWIMMING

SYDNEY, Sept 16: Australia's Ian Thorpedo Thorpe scored a direct hit as an explosive first day of Olympic swimming Saturday saw five world records tumble in four finals, reports AFP.

Thorpe delivered two of them, in the 400m freestyle and the men's 4x100m freestyle relay. Michael Klim led off the relay in a world record 48.18 and Chris Fyler and Ashley Callus swam the middle legs as Australia dealt the United States their first ever defeat in the event in Olympic competition.

"It's an incredible feeling," Thorpe said. "It's an honour to get this gold for the country."

Ukrainian Yana Klochkova warmed up the crowd in the 17,500-seat Sydney International Aquatic Centre with a world record 4min 33.59sec in the women's 400m individual

medley.

Thorpe then sent the packed house into a frenzy with a world record 3:40.59.

Thorpe, 17, improved on his own previous record of 3:41.33 set in this same pool at the Australian Trials on May 13.

"This is the proudest moment of my life," Thorpe said. "I had to swim hard, but I knew I was in great form and the record proves it."

Thorpe who at 15 became the youngest world champion in the history of swimming said his first Olympic gold medal was unique.

"Nothing compares to winning the gold medal."

Victory was especially sweet, Thorpe said, because his training since 1998 hasn't been free of disruptions.

"It was my most difficult preparation," Thorpe said. "I smashed my ankle in Perth, then there were the drugs con-

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Indian pair plots Aussie heartbreak

TENNIS

SYDNEY, Sept 16: Indian doubles ace Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi are confident they will wreck the Woodies farewell party in the Olympic tennis tournament, reports AFP.

The Indians, the world top doubles pair before they split up last year, have reformed their partnership for Sydney and despite a lack of competitive match practice are seen as the Australian duo's main rivals for gold.

Their time apart however means they have not been seeded here and Friday's draw was less than kind, lining them up to meet the Australians, Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge, in the second round.

"We were not seeded, so we expected a tough draw," Bhupathi, who arrived here on Friday, told AFP Saturday after the

pair's first practice session at the Olympic tennis centre.

"But if we are planning on winning a medal here we have got to beat a lot of good teams."

"We have come to win the tournament so we expect a lot of tough matches."

Paes, who won India's only medal in Atlanta four years ago — a bronze in the singles, dismissed suggestions that the pair were struggling to recover the on-court understanding that helped them reach all four Grand Slam finals last year winning the French Open and Wimbledon.

"The understanding we never lose. That is something that we create as two individuals," he said. "It's a matter of just getting our games together and for that we have to patient and ready to work really hard. Things will come into place."

The Indian number one, who is also playing singles here and was India's flag bearer in Friday's Opening Ceremony, also played down the pressure of being the country's best medal

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Samba beat on Bondi Beach

BEACH VOLLEYBALL

SYDNEY, Sept 16: Brazil's powerful female beach volleyball teams sounded an ominous warning to their American and Australian rivals at the Bondi Beach Stadium here Saturday with both pairs cruising through their opening matches, reports AFP.

Defending Olympic champion Sandra Pires and her latest partner Adriana Samuel made short work of Cuba's Tamara Larrea and Dalida Fernandez, romping home by a 15-4 scoreline.

And favourites Adriana Behar and Sheila Bede, the current Pan-American champions, were even more convincing, dispatching Bulgarians Tsvetelina and Petia Yanchulova 15-3.

Behar refused to get carried away, saying: "We'll be training really hard over the next couple of days and we hope to keep it up."

It was an awesome performance from Brazil and left the women from the United States and Australia in no doubt they will have to be at their peak if they are to top the podium.

Pires, who won her gold medal in Atlanta with Jackie Silva and was given the accolade of bearing Brazil's flag at Friday's opening ceremony, produced a convincing performance with Samuel, though the pair who have not yet struck the same rapport on the sand that the woman from Rio de Janeiro had with Silva.

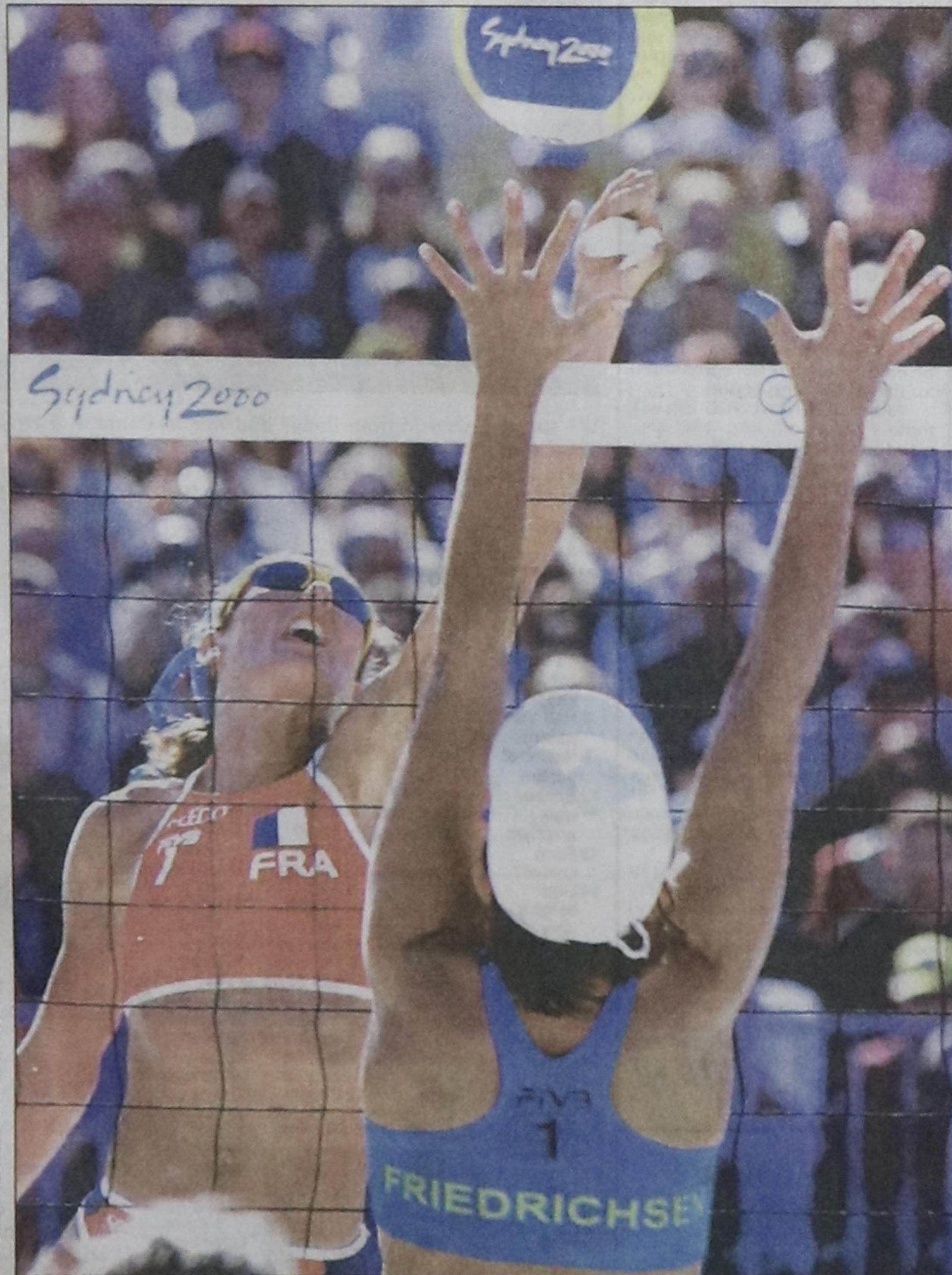
"We're very happy," beamed Samuel. "It's a good sign for us to make the final."

Pires, a deeply religious 27-year-old, had been troubled by a calf injury when preparing for Sydney in Canada but there was little evidence of any problems.

Australia — uniquely with three teams in the women's competition — had mixed fortunes.

Medal hopes Tania Gooley and Pauline Manser made a

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NET TO NET: Anabelle Prawerman(L) of France spikes while Germany's Maike Friedrichsen tries to block it during their Olympic beach volleyball encounter at Bondi Beach yesterday. France won 16-14. — AFP photo

Bye, bye Olyroos

FOOTBALL

SYDNEY, Sept 16: Host nation Australia became the first high-profile casualty of the Olympic men's soccer tournament here Saturday as Italy lived up to their status as one of the favourites for gold by cruising into the quarter-finals, reports AFP.

In the night's other matches, Kuwait upset the Czech Republic in Brisbane and the United States drew 1-1 with Cameroon, leaving Group C still wide open.

NIGERIA - 3, AUSTRALIA - 2

A terrible mistake by Australian defender Simon Colomiso gifted Nigeria a 3-2 victory at a packed Sydney Football Stadium, leaving the Olyroos with two defeats from two games and no chance of progressing.

His 64th-minute back header was woefully short and Victor Agali was able to round his corner past a startled Christian Abbiati to give Honduras a glimmer of hope.

Colomiso was lucky to still be on the pitch at that point after the game booted over ten minutes into the second-half.

Australian captain Brett Emerton elbowed his Nigerian counterpart Celestine Babayaro in the face sparking a prolonged melee during which Colomiso appeared to strike Yakubu Ayegbeni to the ground.

Amazingly it was Babayaro not Colomiso who joined Emerton on the long walk to the touchline for an early bath.

Two classic goals on the counter-attack had earlier put the Nigerians in the driving seat.

First Pius Ikedra ran onto a through ball from Julius Agahowa and finished clinically from ten yards then Agahowa produced a delicate chip from a tight angle to lift the ball over the onrushing Missevici.

But the Australians showed great character and hit back with two goals in three minutes just before the interval to level the game up.

Hayden Foxe's free-kick took a wicked deflection to cut the deficit then a sublime piece of skill from Celtic striker Mark Viduka put Kasey Wehrman in for the equaliser.

ITALY - 3, HONDURAS - 1

Italy made light work of Honduras in the other Group A match in Adelaide — racing to a 3-0 lead after just 21 minutes.

Gianni Commandini opened the scoring with a glancing header from Nicola Ventola's flick-on after 11 minutes.

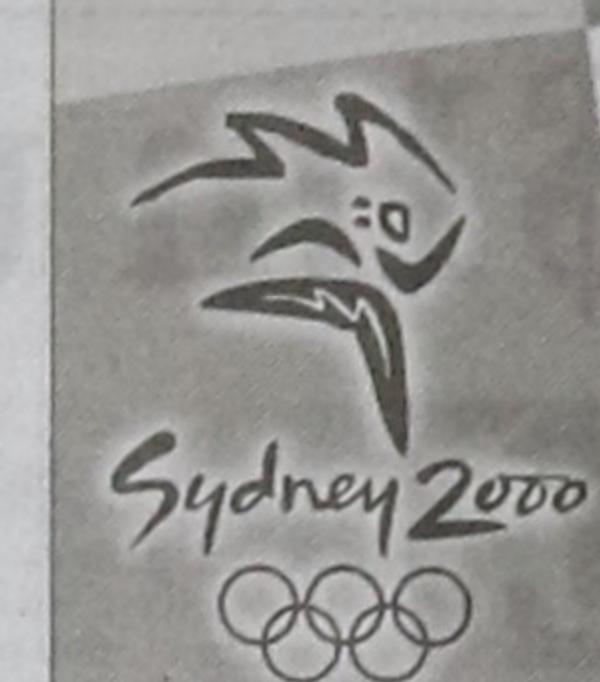
Three minutes later Massimo Ambrosini thumped in a header from outside the penalty box to double the lead.

Then Commandini added his

second, capitalising on poor defending to fire home from the edge of the area.

He should have claimed his hat-trick just minutes later but

and played out the second-half in time honoured tradition, though Ventola managed to squander two simple opportunities.



Nigeria need a point in their final match, against the Italians, to be certain of finishing above Honduras in the second qualifying place.

KUWAIT - 3, CZECH REPUBLIC - 2

In Group C, striker Faraj La-

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GOLDEN MUM: Switzerland's Brigitte MacMahon acknowledges the applause from the crowd while her three-year-old son Dominic looks at the gold medal MacMahon won in the first ever Olympic triathlon competition yesterday. — AFP photo

Dutch, Pakistan toil

HOCKEY

SYDNEY, Sept 16: Defending champions Netherlands rode on the generosity of Britain's Callum Giles to make a winning start as the top guns struggled for form on the opening day of the Olympic men's hockey on Saturday.

Giles wasted a penalty stroke to help the Dutch secure a hard-fought 4-2 win over a vastly improved British team in Group A.

Asian giants Pakistan were lucky to survive a 2-2 draw against resurgent Canada, while two other strong contend-

ers for the gold, South Korea and Spain, played out a listless 1-1 draw.

In the day's last match, Germany gained full points off Malaysia with a 1-0 win. Bjorn Emmerling scoring off a penalty corner in the 43rd minute.

Germany, which last won the Olympic title at Barcelona in 1992, joined the Dutch at the top of the group with three points.

The Dutch, the pre-tournament favourites with the Olympic, World and Champions' Trophy titles in the bag, struggled to keep the British at bay until Giles let slip the advantage.

Captain Stephen Veen capitalised on the let-off, scoring twice in the remaining period to give the champions full points in the Group A match.

Giles said he did not know how he missed. "I usually don't miss too many strokes. There can be no excuse."

Veen, the Dutch captain, conceded his team was tense at the start. "Our first match is

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AIR ALEXEI! Russian reigning world champion Alexei Nemov soars in the air during his floor exercise routine at the Super Dome in Sydney yesterday. — AFP photo